1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

the coast is broken by three large inlets, allowing of safe anchorage for schooners, with comparatively easy access to the shore, and so affording sites for coco-nut plantations, maintained for the production of copra, which, except for a little fishing for trochus shell, is the only possibility the country offers to white men. Between and behind these plantations are more native villages. The hinterland soon breaks into foot-hills, and behind these rises range after range of heavily forested mountains, a difficult region, much of which has not yet been explored. The interior is volcanic, culminating, as far as the northern half of the island is concerned, in the active volcano Balbi (9,500 ft.), an object of mysterious dread to the natives, who place there the home of their dead.

The peninsula at the north-western end of the island, the scene of many of the activities described in the following pages, slopes gently down from the cliffs on its northern shore, to a flat sandy beach bordering the bay which forms its southern boundary, some five miles distant (Pl. 1 *b*). The interior of this peninsula is covered with what I take to be secondary forest; the whole of it has probably been cleared at one time or another by the natives for their taro gardens, the positions of which they must change frequently.

A cleared track, known as 'the Government road', runs round the greater part of the coast of Buka, and, in places, when sufficiently dry, is possible for wheeled vehicles, enabling the planters to run a lorry for the collection of copra. There is a similar road along the north coast of Bougainville and down the east coast for some ninety miles, as far as Kieta, the place of residence of the District Officer and the only settlement other than isolated plantations on the island. This road is, in dry weather, also practicable for wheeled traffic for rather more than ten miles to the east of Buka Passage, but after that it encounters the Umu Mountains, which, though not high, are steep, and thenceforward a succession of rivers (innocent of bridges) and hilly patches make it improbable that the road will be available for any but pedestrians for a long time to come. It affords pleasant walking, and is much used by the natives in their numerous comings and goings, to visit relatives, to exchange commodities, or merely for fun. The people of each village are held responsible for keeping in traversable condition the stretch of road for a certain distance on either side of their village. They are supposed to work on it one day a week. The women do most of the work.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

The methods previously described are those of preparing taro for ordinary everyday consumption, and are all in the hands of the women. Besides these, there is another method of preparation, which is considered of great importance. This is the making of *menak*, which may be described as 'ceremonial pudding', as it is not made as part of an ordinary meal, but only for use in a prescribed manner on special occasions. The making of *menak* involves the expenditure of a considerable amount of time and trouble. Because of its ceremonial character, it is exclusively in the hands of the men, women taking no share either in the preparation or in the cooking. The method of making it is as follows: Taro tubers in sufficient quantity are peeled and boiled. When they are soft they are taken out of the pot, and put a few at a time into a large flat wooden tray made for the purpose (*kōn*), and are pounded with a wooden pounder, which is usually nothing more elaborate than a stout stick the end of which has been carefully stripped of its bark. If no *kōn* is available, a dish made of the stiff sheath of the areca-palm (*kōbū*) may be used instead. While some of the men are busy pounding, others are scraping the meat of a coco-nut which is riper than those used for drinking, the meat being now hard and solid. The contained liquid is thrown away, or may be given to the pigs; at this stage it is not considered fit for human consumption. The meat is scraped from the shell by means of a serrated shell, fixed on to the end of a long board. Sometimes the broad end of an old canoe-paddle is utilized for this purpose. On one I brought home the shell is a species of cardium (see Pl. 38, no. 9). The operator sits on this board, holding the projecting end, fitted with its shell, between his knees. The scrapings fall into a receptacle placed on the ground in front of him. When a large quantity of coco-nut meat has been shredded, it is squeezed through a piece of coco-nut fibre (*ipoits*). A liquid resembling milk is the result, this is poured into a native pot of oval shape with a lip at each end (*kepa*, Pl. 61*a*, no. 3); the usual round ones are not used for this purpose. The pot is put on a fire and kept on the boil until the contents become very thick. This mixture is added to the pounded taro, mixed well by stirring, and the resulting paste is either made into balls by rubbing between the palms (Pl. 33), or, more often, pressed into frames made of thin lathes of wood, about an inch wide. These frames are then made up into a rectangular package by wrapping them in banana leaves, and are placed in an

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

feast. Sometimes they are eaten as they are, almost raw, sometimes they are cooked a little more, by being placed on the fire a second time.

The procedure of cooking pigs is always the same as that above described. The men always attend to it throughout; women are allowed to be present and to look on, but they never take any part in the work. If several pigs are to be cooked, there may be quite a number of men engaged in the various operations. On one occasion I counted ten men busy over the cooking of four pigs (see Pl. 35).

Opossum are skinned and cleaned before being cooked. The animal is pulled apart at the joints, and each section, with the meat on it, is roasted separately by being laid on the fire and scorched, or wrapped in a package of leaves and cooked slowly in the embers of a smouldering fire. More rarely, they are smoked whole. I once, at a bartering expedition, saw a woman with a load of smoked opossums on her back; they looked exactly like mummied cats. Flying foxes are treated in the same way as opossum, and are much appreciated by the boys wearing the *upi* who may not eat the other animal at a certain stage in their rites. Bats of a smaller variety are cooked, frequently by children, by holding them over a fire. Iguanas are eaten only occasionally, if other flesh food has been scarce.

The bush abounds with insects of the grasshopper family, some reaching a length of 3 or 4 inches. These are considered great delicacies by the children, who toast them by impaling them on sticks held over a fire. They told me that these creatures were '*Tab en a dum tsū-u-u-u-u-u-n!*' 'Something very, very, very good to eat!' Adults are not above eating them when they feel so inclined.

The coast people will not eat snakes (*koro*), but they say the mountain people do so. This, however, was denied by those whom I had an opportunity of questioning on the subject, so it may be only a recognized form of insult. There are a number of stories in my collection dealing with people who inadvertently ate a snake, either by mistake for a *met'on* (sea slug), or through a mean trick played by some one else, who gives the man a piece of snake telling him it is opossum, an impertinence for which the practical joker, in most of the tales, pays with his life.

Several different kinds of frogs are used as food. The generic

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

the seepings which run down the cliffs and percolate through the sand towards the sea.

It is the duty of the women, particularly the younger women and girls, to bring in the water in the morning and again about sunset (Pl. 36*b*). It is carried in coco-nut shells cleaned out for the purpose through one of the eyes. The outside of such shells is often polished by continual rubbing, and may be ornamented with seeds or shells stuck in with the 'putty nut'. They are always carefully rinsed before being filled. The hole is plugged with a stopper (*pipip*) made of a smooth leaf (of the plant called *gartan*) by folding it in an ingenious manner round the finger and tucking the ends in. These water-containers (Pl. 36*a*) are called *ruin*; the same word is used for fresh water generally and also means a stream. They are never used for sea-water, which is usually transported in lengths of bamboo (Pl. 37*d*). I have known men from the mountains walk many miles to the sea in order to fill as many of these bamboos as they could carry back with them, this being their only means of obtaining salt.

Ten or a dozen water coco-nuts will carry home the family's supply for the day. Not much of it is expended on personal cleanliness, but I have sometimes seen babies being washed by having the contents of one of the coco-nuts poured over them. Most of it is used for cooking, chiefly for boiling taro. These people do not, as a rule, drink at meal-times, but will take a draught from one of the coco-nuts some little time after eating. Water will sometimes be carried to the taro gardens for consumption in the course of the day's work, but the liquid from a green coco-nut is more often drunk on such occasions, being usually obtainable in the locality. One could not want a more refreshing drink, since the shell and the thick outer sheath keep the liquid cool under the hottest sun. On the whole they seem to drink comparatively little, especially considering the heat of the sun and the starchiness of much of their food. If a person is thirsty while walking through the bush, and cannot obtain coco-nuts, he will search for a special kind of plant with a leaf similar to that of a banana, the native name of which is *obau*. It grows in clumps, a number of rather thin stems close together. Their colour is greenish streaked with brown. By making a vertical slit in one of these stems a spurt of watery liquid will be obtained, with which, by putting the mouth close to the cut, thirst can be most refreshingly assuaged. There is another taller

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

lime is made from coral; branched coral heavy preferred

preparation is the work of the women, and consists of burning the coral with a minimum of slaking. The work is carried on in the recesses of the bush, the place being kept secret and no men permitted to approach it. Large quantities are prepared at a time, at infrequent intervals.

Areca-nut and betel-pepper must be provided in abundance on every ceremonial occasion, and are always given to visitors from other villages to take home with them on their return. Each individual carries his own supply of lime, or begs a dip from his neighbour; it is not provided with the other ingredients. When in his own village the chewer of the betel-mixture will freely fling the skins about on the ground, to be swept up by the women in the course of their cleaning. They are thrown away in any convenient spot, in the case of villages on the cliff top generally over the cliff, or they may be burnt. There does not appear to be any special place for disposing of them, as is described by Ivens (1927, p. 287) for the SE. Solomons. But when on a visit to another village, particularly to one in the mountains, where there is always a feeling that the people are not to be trusted, the skins are carefully put into the little basket which everybody carries, and brought away, lest an enemy should use them for making 'bad medicine'.

Branches of areca-nuts are carried by the messengers sent out by the *tsunaun* to summon people to a ceremony. (Cf. Ivens, 1927, p. 288.)

The natives say that chewing the betel-mixture 'makes them feel strong'. I can testify that when they have plenty to chew they are livelier and more inclined to talk. It is known to them that people who chew too much of it are apt to fall into a slightly dazed and stupid condition, and there are a very few who do not like the effect it has upon them and therefore avoid it. The majority, however, obviously feel lost without it, like an inveterate smoker left without tobacco.

STORIES OF THE ORIGIN OF VARIOUS FOODSTUFFS

Among my collection of stories there is a large number explaining how the people came to be possessed of, or to learn to use, certain of their foodstuffs. Many of these turn on the activities of the famous 'two brothers', and are connected with a widespread series extending over a large part of the Pacific (see references in my paper on Folk-tales, 1932, p. 74). As the stories are in most cases

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

Presently a third comes up with a young tree balanced on each shoulder, with which to repair the fence where the pigs have broken through. An old man, entirely unencumbered by clothing of any description, alternately squats and stoops as he clears the patch of the ferns and grasses that tropical sun and rain so persistently replace. Balanced on a stump, beside the glowing embers at which the workers constantly rekindle their perpetual pipes, a baby opossum is being roasted to a turn. On the edge of the cleared patch a young man slashes with a long knife at the tangle of wild banana plants, ferns, creepers, and what-not that makes up the underbrush of a tropical forest where the trees are not too thick. Another young man, carrying a long spear, appears out of the bush where he has been hunting wild pig with the aid of the half-dozen or so lean and mangy mongrels which come bounding after him. With one accord they make a hungry rush for the roasting 'possum, which its owner hastens to retrieve and wrap in a banana leaf. Everybody stops work to light up pipes and listen to the woeful tale of the unsuccesaful hunter, who explains why the pig got away. Presently he goes on, taking his curs with him, and work begins again."

Although, as has been seen, men may, and frequently do, help with the weeding, the actual planting must on no account be done by them. The reason given by the women was that the men did not know how, and if they did it the taro would not thrive. Those who wish may see in this practice some connexion with the idea of fertility.

Taro for the daily needs of the household is continually planted, fresh stalks being put in whenever any are taken out. It is propagated only—so far as my information and observation lead me to believe—by replanting tops of tubers, with the stalks left attached. I have never seen or heard of offsets being used, as is reported by Williams for the Orokaiva (1928, p. 137). Each woman looks after the needs of her own family. But when a great quantity of taro is going to be needed for a special occasion, the whole village works together on a large new clearing, the various sections of which, however, remain the private property of individuals. A man will mark out a patch for each of his wives, and one for his mother, if she lives with him, or any other dependent female relative, including his sister, should she be a widow living in the same village. During the process of clearing some of the more industrious

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

411 furnished with bone barbs as are the spears formerly used in war, and now kept for ceremonial purposes.

224 When a large number of pigs is required for some feast, a drive is organized in which all the men and boys of the village take part. Even quite little boys will be allowed to join, but the women do [462] not go. 'It isn't women's work', they said when I asked if the women ever helped on these occasions. But, as usual, they made an exception in my favour, so that I am able to give a first-hand description of the procedure.

224 They use a series of long nets, made of heavy string, consisting 286 of a number of fibres of the plant used for string-making twisted 283 together. The form of knot is the same as that used in fishing-nets, but the mesh is very large. It is measured round a wooden gauge shaped rather like the business end of a spade. Not every village possesses these nets; those who have none borrow from their 224 neighbours. A narrow path is cleared through the bush to allow of the nets being fixed end to end. About six nets are usually employed, they stretch for a distance of several hundred yards. The nets are pegged down with bits of wood, and kept taut by means of canes and tree stumps. Through the top is threaded a stout cord, carefully fastened to a stump at the end of each section. The height of the net from the ground to this cord is about 3 feet. Men sit or squat at short intervals along the line waiting to catch and tie the legs of any pig that is stopped by the net. Behind the line of nets, at some distance, the rest of the party and all the dogs form a wide semicircle, and gradually close in upon the nets. They shout and slash at the bush with their knives, driving any pigs which may be within the enclosed area up to the nets. Frequently one of the animals breaks through and escapes. This inevitably leads to recriminations among the men watching at the nets, and arguments as to which of them ought to have been brave enough to have prevented this catastrophe by putting his spear through the pig. Wounded boars can be very ferocious, and I have known men to be badly hurt by them. It is said that sometimes men are killed. After each such drive the net is taken up and reset in another place farther on. This process may be repeated many times during a day's hunt.

231 It not infrequently happens that one of the pigs thus caught turns out to be some one's property, since the village pigs have the run of the bush. A domestic pig will be recognized by the

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

226 are caught, even if only a single one, there is great rejoicing. If the catch is a large one, the fish are shared by all the people of the village; a small catch is distributed among the men who went out; if only one fish is taken it belongs to the owner of the canoe.

The most important place in this region, in connexion with bonito fishing, is the island of Pororan. Men from other parts of Buka and from the north coast of Bougainville go to Pororan to learn the special magic required for it, and it is from there that the stone fish which play an important part in that magic are obtained. The men who were specialists in these matters at Kurtatchi said that they had learnt what they knew from the people of Pororan, who knew much more than they did.

226 462 Bonito fishing is the work of men exclusively; the women have no part in the catching, but they are permitted to carry home, clean, and cook the fish. The older boys take part in it while still wearing the *upi*, but I did not hear of any ceremony corresponding to the 'making *malaohu*' described by Ivens (1927, pp. 131 ff.) in connexion with a boy's first fishing expedition.

Bonito hook and rod.

227 Bonito are caught with a long flexible rod of bamboo, and a special hook, which is used for no other purpose.

227 321 825 This hook (*ayats* in the Petats dialect, *kanun* in the Kurtatchi dialect) consists of a shell shank with a point made of turtle-shell. For the shank, *Tridacna* (clam) is generally employed, but *Meleagrina* (the black-lip oyster), *Conus* (the green-snail), *Turbo*, and *Cassis* are also used. If made of clam shell, the shank is flattened on the under side, in other cases it may be slightly convex, following the curve of the shell, so that in cross-section it may be either ⌓ or ⌒. The proximal end has a small tang, behind which the 227 283 line is fastened. The line is never, so far as I know, carried along the upper side of the shank and attached near the point, as is described by Hiroa for Samoa (1930, p. 501). The distal end of the shank is cut so as to leave a projecting piece, or sometimes two, on each side; between and on both sides of this is twisted the lashing which secures the point. The lashing consists of native fibre-string, of different thicknesses according to the size of the hook, twisted round both point and shank several times, the arrangement differing considerably in individual specimens, but always very neatly finished. Tiny bits of wood are wedged on either side of

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

Kouhou (a creeper).

Chew the root with betel-mixture, spit on to your palm, and rub all over your skin before you start out; this will cause the fish to bite. 226 824

Waqoguir (a large tree which grows on the shore).

Pound some of the bark and wash it in sea-water. Drink a little of this mixture, and pour the rest over your head. Chew some of the leaves and spit them out into the sea where the tide will carry them away. Then go and fish for bonito and you will have a good catch.

Manipiy (a sweet-scented grass of the *Cymbopogon* species used in India for making citronella oil).

If you have been very unsuccessful, chew the root with betel-mixture and rub your legs where the rod lies across them, then take another piece of the root and put it in your hair when you go fishing.

It is important that a man who goes fishing for bonito should not have sexual intercourse, either with his wife or with any one else, the night before. If he has done so, it is said that the fish smell the woman and will not bite. The disability may be overcome by chewing the root of *bariur* (*Crinum asiaticum*) with betel-mixture and rubbing the chewed mass on the outside of the thighs where the rod lies across them. This 'removes the smell of the woman' and the fish will then bite. A man whose wife is pregnant must on no account go out in a bonito canoe, neither must a man who is newly married and has recently slept with his wife for the first time. There is no 'medicine' to counteract this taboo. 226 834 824 843

Other fishing methods

For fish other than bonito a variety of methods is employed, of which the following are the most important: 226 462

METHODS USED BY MEN ONLY

A. *Open sea and lagoon fishing.*

1. Net on frame.
2. Troll line.
3. Rod and line.
4. Fishing kite.

B. *Reef fishing.*

5. Bow and arrow.
6. Spear.
7. Line and hook.
8. Hand-plunging trap.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

9. Thorn-lined trap.
10. Stunning and poisoning.
11. Drives.

METHODS USED BY WOMEN ONLY

12. Barricade of leaves.
13. Women's hand-net.
14. Basket.
15. Groping with hand under stones.
16. Collecting shell-fish.

METHODS USED BY BOTH SEXES

C. *Freshwater fishing.*

17. Hand-net.
18. Dam made of leaves.

METHODS USED BY MEN ONLY

A. *Open sea and lagoon fishing.*

The outrigger canoe is used in these methods, and as a rule the fishermen do not go very far out, preferring the smoother water off the lee shore, though they do, in favourable weather, also venture into the open sea. Women do not take part in these excursions, but there are none of the sexual taboos which are observed in connexion with bonito fishing.

1. *Net on frame.*

The net (*ā bean*, P.; *ēb*, K.[1]) is made of native fibre-string. This string is made of the tough fibrous layer underlying the skin of the stem of a running creeper called *karēb*, by rolling on the bare thigh. It must be made in short sections, as the creeper-stem is furnished with a series of nodes at intervals of six or seven inches, at which the fibre breaks off when stripped. The short lengths are joined by twisting the ends between the fingers. For the finer string, two strands of this fibre are sufficient. The action of rolling on the thigh is called *kanun*. This suffices for the finest nets for catching small fish. For lines intended for bonito and for nets for bigger fish several strands are twisted together on the thigh, and three sets of these are rolled (not plaited) over and over each other

[1] P. = Petats dialect, K. = Kurtatchi dialect. The native terms given are in the Kurtatchi dialect unless otherwise specified.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

with one hand while held between the first and second finger of the other. The word for making string by twisting thus is *sē*. The string is made in all the villages of Buka and the north coast of Bougainville. The village of Hanahan has a reputation for making the finest nets.

Both string-making and netting are occupations for men only. In making a net, one end is tied to a pole or some convenient object, often the ridge-pole of a hut, and the netting is done from side to side across the width of the net, with the help of a netting needle consisting of a piece of cane about a foot long, split at both ends. The string is wound round this and the whole needle is pushed through the mesh. A short flat piece of cane is used as a gauge. The knot is similar to that used in our own fishing-nets.

The frame (*ēviat*) is of bamboo, a stout cane for the proximal end, with a smaller cane lashed to it at its distal end; this may be followed by a still smaller one, till the required length is obtained. When the net is fixed, the distal end of the frame is pulled over into a curve. The distal end is fixed first, the string at the outer edge of the net being caught in a slit at the end of the frame. The other corners of the net are tied on to the frame (Fig. 13*a*). In the larger nets a separate piece of bamboo fixed at an angle to the main part of the frame supports the proximal end (Fig. 13*b*). Some men also make small nets in the same way, and add a handle (Fig. 13*c*). To fix a net on to the frame is *nui u ēb*. It is done just before starting out on a trip; the nets are then placed in the canoe frame downwards, with the proximal ends protruding from one end of the canoe. On returning, the net is at once removed from the frame and stretched on branches or on the beach to dry; the frame, released from its curve, is put up in the lower branches of a tree.

These nets are used in pairs. They vary greatly in size; a large pair will be as much as a man can lift. I have seen quite young boys using small pairs. The longest net, used for deep-sea fishing, is called *kabir*; many kinds of fish are caught by it. The names of some of them, in the Kurtatchi dialect, are *asnots*, *susui*, *metapui*, *tsesaget*, *soomo*, *mutul*, the last being described as a very large fish (about 4 feet long, as indicated by a gesture) with a square mouth. Another long net is called *kakawi*, and is used especially for catching *buri* (mullet) on the reef.

Fishing with the *ēb* is carried on either by a number of canoes working in conjunction, or by single canoes, in which one man

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

X

USEFUL ARTS

SOME of the objects manufactured by these people have been already described; others which have not yet received attention are grouped together for discussion in the present chapter.

Compared with other regions of the Pacific, that portion of the north-western Solomon Islands with which I am acquainted would seem not to be a very rich area, so far as material culture is concerned. The articles made are relatively few in number, and at the present time the workmanship is on the whole rather poor, though it would appear that more care may have been taken over the making of some of these things in the past.

As usual in a primitive community, a sharp line is drawn between handicrafts proper to men and those practised by women, a line seldom if ever crossed. I take this division of labour, therefore, as the basis of classification for my descriptions. For men the principal industries are canoe-building, house-building, fire-making, and, in the olden days, the manufacture of weapons; for women, the manufacture of shell-knives, pottery, baskets, and women's hoods. Some of these crafts are practised in certain parts of the area only.

MEN'S WORK

Means of Navigation

The Raft.

From numerous discussions with the natives it seems that the original form of navigable vessel in these parts was the raft (*u aminē*, P., *panots*, K.). Rafts are still used to a limited extent for getting about on the reef when it is covered with shallow water. They consist of a small platform of logs lashed together, and are paddled with a canoe paddle.

The Dug-out Canoe (*dzini*, P., *tsiniv*, K.).

For reef-fishing, and for short journeys in smooth water, a dug-out canoe with a single outrigger is used. This form of canoe seems to be confined to the north-western islands, as far as the Solomon group is concerned. Guppy (1887, p. 146) says that in the eastern

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

dropped some excrement on to the coco-nut shell, and it flared up; this was the first fire.

It will be noticed that neither of these versions account for the process of making fire by rubbing. But the second story, which I heard at Tiop, tells how a man and his wife, while drying their taro in the sun, saw two branches which were being rubbed together by the wind. They tried it for themselves, and first smoke came from the sticks and then flame. Then they brought wood and made a big fire and cooked their bananas on it. At first the other men were afraid, but presently they came and asked where the two had found this thing. They said they had found it in the bush. Then they showed all the people how to make fire and how to keep it alight.

WOMEN'S WORK

Pottery

There is only one place in Buka and North Bougainville where pottery is made.[1] This is the group of six small hamlets, three on the cliff and three on the shore below, which make up the village of Malasang, on the east coast of Buka towards its southern end, about six miles from the entrance to Buka Passage.

All the women of Malasang know how to make pots; they teach the craft to their daughters and to the wives of their sons. A novice starts by making small pots, increasing the size of her products as she grows more skilful. Only a few of the women can make the very largest pots. There seems to be no standard of skill except as regards size. I did not hear of any woman noted for making especially fine or well-shaped ones. They are made in large numbers, far in excess of domestic requirements, since there is a market for them over the whole of Buka and North Bougainville.

Materials.

There are two ingredients in the mixture from which the pots are made. The bulk of it consists of a greenish clay called *petako*. It is quite plentiful in the bush, and is uncovered by the pigs in their search for water. The other ingredient is called *mimia*, and

[1] Pottery is also made on the east coast of Bougainville, near Kieta, where the technique is similar, but the shape slightly different, and at Buin on the extreme southern end of the island; the manufacture of the latter I have not seen (Pl. 61a, no. 4).

Manufacture. Slit-gongs are made of hard wood. The

name of the tree from which the wood is taken is *tolos* (P.) or *toras* (K.). 549
Some villages do not know how to make these instruments for 824
themselves; those who require one either buy it from other villages 184
or pay workmen to come to their own place to make it. There were 436
three unfinished ones in the deserted village of Gorren; those who
commissioned them had not wished to pay the men of Hanahan to
finish them. The best are said to be made by the people of Sollos,
the hill district of Buka, to whom the art was first taught, according
to the legend. Ownership of a *garamuts* is individual, and is re- 422
stricted to persons who are *tsunaun*. A Kurtatchi man bought a 565
fair-sized instrument from the island of Pororan for one fathom of 435
paio (ceremonial currency of flying-fox teeth), one fathom of *beroan*
(shell-disk currency), and ten bamboo lengths of *oin* (red paint).
The man who made it demanded another fathom of *paio*, but did
not get it.

They are made in the bush, where a shelter is erected over the 549
spot. In the olden days they were shaped with stone or clam-shell
implements, but now the outside is worked with metal blades
hafted like an adze. Sticks are fastened along the top to define the
narrow opening. The inside is then hollowed out with iron pig-
spears or with knives fastened on to long rods. This used to be
done with clam-shell tools. Leaves are rubbed on the instru-
ment in process of working to make it easier, so that it will be
finished quickly. They are also rubbed on the hands of the worker,
together with lime, and then smeared over the slit-gong. I could
not learn if any form of words is used with this procedure. If the
instrument is left too long unfinished the wood gets too hard to
work. To make one is considered quite an important undertaking.
If two people work on it fairly constantly it takes about three
weeks. Only a few people know the procedure; they pass on their
knowledge to any one they care to select. Anybody can watch it [462]
being made, but the women take no part in making it.

Slit-gongs vary considerably in size. The largest I saw measured 534
about 8 feet in length, the smallest about 3 feet. None were made
at the village of Kurtatchi, but Karabun of Tabut made a small one
at my request. This, though smaller than those in general use, was
more than a model, since it was used in several dances before being
handed over to me. The people were delighted with its tone, in
fact some of them wanted it to be retained in the village instead of
being given to me. It is decorated with a conventional pattern.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

XII

SOME ECONOMIC MATTERS

IN this chapter I shall endeavour to bring together what information I could obtain concerning material possessions, their acquisition, ownership, and inheritance.

BARTER

A well-organized and to some extent standardized system of barter takes place regularly between various villages. The word used for such an organized exchange of commodities is *toan* in the Petats dialect and *tog* in the Kurtatchi dialect. The most important arrangement of this kind is the exchange of fish and taro between coastal and inland villages. Few villages are so fortunate in their geographical situation as to be self-contained as regards both these essentials to existence. The land near the coast is not very good for growing taro; the inland peoples have only the small amount of fish they can take from the rivers. There are, therefore, at short intervals, prearranged meetings of the women of one village with the women of another for the exchange of these commodities at fixed rates. Certain villages trade regularly with certain others, but their operations may also, on occasion, extend farther afield.

The people of Petats are well situated in respect of facilities for fishing, but they have little ground suitable for growing taro. The exchange from this village is therefore with the villages of the hill districts of central Buka, where taro grows well. The meeting-place is either on the coast of Buka or on the Government road running through the centre of the island, at some spot about halfway between the two places, so that the distance is not excessive for either party. The trips are made several times a week, except in very unfavourable weather, sometimes on consecutive days if fish are plentiful. For example, parties went from Petats on Oct. 4, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 19, 23. They start before dawn, especially when a canoe journey of some length is involved, because there is generally less wind than later in the day. Sometimes one or two men will accompany the party to help with the paddling, but they take no part in the bartering. It is the duty of the husband, or